

today, the current levels of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere almost certainly will produce additional temperature increases. Realistic projections of future warming range from 2 to 11.5° F.

These are the findings of scientists and governments from across the globe, as set forth in the most recent report of the IPCC, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. That report was written by some 600 scientists and reviewed by 600 experts. It was then edited by officials from 154 governments. The IPCC report concludes that it is "unequivocal that Earth's climate is warming as it is now evident from the observations of increases in global averages of air and ocean temperatures, widespread melting of snows and ice, and rising global mean sea level."

Scientists expect that the earth's increased temperatures will cause an increase in extreme weather events, including more powerful storms, more frequent floods, and extended droughts. These changes threaten the health and safety of individuals and communities around the globe. These changes also pose a significant threat to the economy, and will put added pressure on water resources, increasing competition among agricultural, municipal, industrial, and ecological uses.

The United States is extremely vulnerable to these threats. Coastal communities and habitats, especially along the gulf and Atlantic coasts, will be stressed by increasing sea level and more intense storms, both of which can lead to greater storm surges and flooding. In the West, there will be more flooding in the winter and early spring followed by more water shortages during the summer. The Great Lakes and major river systems are expected to have lower water levels, exacerbating existing challenges for managing water quality, navigation, recreation, hydropower generation, and water transfers. The Southwestern United States is already in the midst of a drought that is projected to continue in the 21st century and may cause the area to transition to a more arid climate.

The Corps of Engineers stands on the front lines of all of these threats to our water resources. They are our first responders in the fight against global warming. Hurricane and flood protection for New Orleans, levees along the Mississippi and Missouri Rivers, levees in Sacramento, CA, and ports up and down our coasts, east and west are just a few of the many hundreds of Corps projects that will feel the strain, impact, and consequences of global climate change.

Corps planning currently does not take climate change into account. To the contrary, the Corps' current planning guidelines are explicitly based on the existence of a stable and unchanging climate, and on the assumption that flooding is not affected by climate trends or cycles. Continued reliance on these outdated guidelines is like driving down the highway at 80 miles an

hour with blinders on. It is bound to lead to disaster.

The only climate change impact addressed by the Corps' guidelines is sea level rise. Under its internal planning guidelines, the Corps is supposed to take account of sea level rise when planning coastal projects. Those guidelines do not require the Corps to assess any other effects of global warming like increased hurricanes, storm surges, and flooding. The Corps' compliance even with its internal requirement to look at sea level rise is spotty at best. For example, in proposing a \$133 million dredging project for Bolinas Lagoon in northern California, the Corps said it would not address sea level rise because it was too complicated to do so.

As importantly, despite a statutory mandate to consider non structural approaches to project planning, the Corps rarely recommends such approaches. This is true even where such approaches could provide the same or better project benefits. The Corps instead relies heavily on its traditional approaches of straight jacketing rivers with levees and floodwalls. These types of projects sever critical connections between rivers and their wetlands and floodplains, and lead to significant coastal and floodplain wetland losses. These approaches have left coastal communities, like New Orleans, far more vulnerable, and have exacerbated flood damages by inducing development in high risk, flood prone areas and by increasing downstream flooding.

Nonstructural approaches should be used whenever possible as they avoid damage to healthy rivers, streams, floodplains, and wetlands that can help buffer the increased storms and flooding that we are seeing as a result of climate change. These systems protect against flooding and storm surge by acting as natural sponges and basins that absorb flood waters and act as barriers between storm surges and homes, buildings, and people. Healthy streams and wetlands also help minimize the impacts of drought by recharging groundwater supplies and filtering pollutants from drinking water. Protecting these resources also provides a host of additional benefits, including providing critical habitat for fish and wildlife, and exceptional recreational opportunities.

Hurricane Katrina showed us the tragic consequences of an intense storm running head on into a badly degraded wetlands system and faulty Corps project planning. Coastal wetlands lost to Corps projects were not available to buffer the Hurricane's storm surge before it slammed into the city. One Corps project, the Mississippi River Gulf Outlet, funneled the storm surge into the heart of New Orleans. Corps projects in New Orleans also were not designed to address the increased sea level rise or land subsidence, and were not strong enough to withstand the type of storm that sci-

entists say may become all too common.

I am committed to ensuring that future Corps planning does not repeat the mistakes of the past, and I urge my colleagues to join me in this fight as we consider future WRDA bills. Corps project planning must account for the realities of climate change, and protect the natural systems that can buffer its affects.●

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from California.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak with Senator FEINGOLD in morning business for 15 minutes.

I understand the other side is going to object to a unanimous consent request. I am going to ask if you would like me to do it upfront. Is that correct?

Mr. ENSIGN. Yes.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. I always oblige the Senator from Nevada. So if I have unanimous consent, that will be the order.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. ENSIGN. Reserving the right to object, the Senator is going to ask for unanimous consent on the bill?

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. If I may finish. It is my understanding that the Senator has another commitment, and therefore I am happy to accommodate him in that regard.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kentucky.

Mr. BUNNING. Mr. President, I wish to ask, you are going to ask unanimous consent on H.R. 1255 also?

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. I would be happy to do that also.

Mr. BUNNING. I will wait then.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. I will do them both first and then both Senators can object, and then Senator FEINGOLD and I will have some time to speak, if that is agreeable.

Mr. BUNNING. Thank you very much.

#### UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST— H.R. 1255

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now proceed to Calendar No. 213, H.R. 1255, Presidential Records Act Amendments of 2007; that the amendment at the desk be considered and agreed to; the bill, as amended, be read three times, passed, and the motion to reconsider laid upon the table; that any statements relating thereto appear at the appropriate place in the RECORD as if read, without intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. BUNNING. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.